

Message Text

SECRET

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14

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 PM-03 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 NSCE-00 NSC-10 EB-03 RSR-01 /056 W

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R 270336Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7587

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

CINCPAC

S E C R E T MANILA 9792

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RP

SUBJECT: SEABORNE INFILTRATION FROM SABAH INTO SULU

1. BOTH PRESIDENT MARCOS AND ALEX MELCHOR HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN TO ME ABOUT THEIR INABILITY TO DETECT AND DETER SEABORNE INFILTRATION FROM SABAH INTO THE SULUS. MELCHOR HAS SPOKEN IN SOME DETAIL ABOUT TRYING TO FIT C-130 AIRCRAFT WITH AIRBORNE RADAR AND OTHER DETECTION DEVICES. I HAVE REPORTED THAT BOTH ADMIRAL ZUMWALT AND ADMIRAL GAYLER WERE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS OF HANDLING THIS MATTER THROUGH GADGETRY.

2. ON AUGUST 26, PRESIDENT MARCOS ADDED A NEW TWIST TO THE PROBLEM. HE SHOWED ME ON A MAP THE OFFSHORE DRILL SITE WHERE CHEVRON IS EXPLORING FOR OIL IN THE SULU AREA. HE SAID THE AMERICAN SUPERVISORS WITH FILIPINO LABORERS WERE WORKING ON THIS RIG UNDER A PHILIPPINE CONCESSION. HOWEVER, THEY WERE BASING THEIR OPERATIONS IN SABAH AND TRAVELING FROM THEIR BASE TO THEIR DRILL-SITE BY SMALL FAST BOATS. BECAUSE HE CONSIDERED THIS RISKY, HE HAD ORDERED

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CONSTRUCTION OF A BASE FACILITY IN ONE OF THE SULUS AND

CHEVRON HAD AGREED TO MOVE ITS BASE THERE WHEN IT IS COMPLETED.

3. MARCOS, WHO SAID HE ATTACHES A GREAT DEAL OF SIGNIFICANCE TO THE OIL EXPLORATION FACTOR IN HIS CURRENT DISPUTE WITH SABAH, SUGGESTED THAT THIS CHEVRON CASE IS ONLY THE BEGINNING. HE EXPECTS A NUMBER OF WELLS TO BE BROUGHT IN CLOSE TO THE SABAH SEA FRONTIER. MANY WILL BE AMERICAN OPERATED. THEY MAY NEED PROTECTION BY THE GOP. ERGO, A SEA SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITY IS IN U.S. INTEREST.

4. COMMENT: THIS WAS THE CLOSEST MARCOS CAME TO RUG MERCHANDIZING IN HIS AUGUST 26 TALK WITH ME. HE DID IT WITH SOME EMBARRASSMENT AND CLEARLY AT THE REQUEST OF HIS STAFF. I DISPLAYED A RATHER DISTANT DISINTEREST.
SULLIVAN

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NNN

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